



## **TRANSITIONAL ACADEMIC FACILITIES PROGRAM**

### ***FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS***

***Revised: October 10, 2005***

#### **1. When is the application deadline?**

Applications must be postmarked or be received in the offices of the Division of Public School Academic Facilities 501 Woodlane, Suite 600 Little Rock, Arkansas 72201, no later than 4:30 PM on December 2, 2005. ***No applications will be accepted after this date.***

#### **2. What does this program do?**

This program is intended to assist in the transition from the State's previous debt assistance program and the new school facilities funding programs by providing reimbursement to a school district for eligible new construction projects for which debt was incurred or funds are spent after January 1, 2005 and on or before June 30, 2006.

#### **3. Who is eligible?**

With the exception open-enrollment charter schools, any school district who has undertaken a new construction project for which debt was incurred or funds are spent after January 1, 2005 and on or before June 30, 2006.

#### **4. What is a new construction project?**

Any improvement to an academic facility and, if necessary, related areas such as the physical plant and grounds, that brings the state of condition or efficiency of the academic facility to a state of condition or efficiency better than the academic facility's original condition of completeness or efficiency; and, an addition to existing academic facilities and new academic facilities.

**5. Our district is undertaking a major renovation project, is that eligible?**

If your renovation brings the state of condition or efficiency of the academic facility to a state of condition or efficiency *better than the academic facility's original condition of completeness or efficiency*, it is by definition “new construction” and would be eligible for funding.

“Renovation” by definition is defined as any activity of improvement to an academic facility and if necessary, related areas, such as the physical plant and grounds that maintains, conserves, or protects the state of condition or efficiency of the academic facility; or brings the state of condition or efficiency of the academic facility up to the facility's original condition of completeness or efficiency. Work of this nature will not be eligible for funding.

**6. Our district's project is currently under construction but we sold our bonds prior to January 1, 2005, are we eligible?**

No school district may become eligible for state financial participation if the funding used to fund the new construction project resulted from proceeds of debt issued prior to January 1, 2005.

**7. We are planning to issue bonds in January of 2006 and begin construction in March of 2006, after the application deadline. Are we eligible for funding?**

Yes, again any project for which debt is incurred or funds are spent after January 1, 2005, and on or before June 30, 2006 is eligible for the transitional program.

**8. Does a project have to adhere to the new school facilities standards to be eligible for funding?**

School districts shall make every effort to conform a new construction project to current academic facilities standards, including, without limitation, appropriate space utilization requirements, **unless in the judgment of the Division it is impractical to conform the new construction project to current standards. If the Division determines that it is impractical for a school district to conform to current standards, the Division shall establish which academic facilities standards the school district shall conform to in order to be eligible for state participation under this program.**

**9. How is State funding calculated?**

Funding will be calculated by the formula of \$90.00 or the actual contract dollar amount (whichever is the lesser amount) per square foot times the square feet of the project times the difference of one hundred percent (100%) minus the facility wealth index for that district.

**10. How will applications be evaluated?**

The Division will prioritize new construction project applications on a competitive basis using a point system to score each project with 0 to 100 points possible. Points will be awarded based on the following criteria:

- A. (50 points) The Division's evaluation of the application and all supporting evidence and documentation.
- B. (10 points) The Division's evaluation of an on-site inspection.
- C. (20 points) The academic facilities wealth index of the school district.
- D. (20 points) The prudent and resourceful expenditure of state funds with regard to public school academic facilities.

**11. How much funding is currently available for this program?**

The Legislature appropriated \$50 million for the Transitional Academic Facilities Program.

**12. How many projects are we allowed to apply for?**

School districts may only submit *one application*, however school districts may identify and prioritize new construction projects on the application and provide a narrative description of the project(s) including graphic documentation and descriptions.